



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

### Virginia Employment Commission

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#### **The Virginia unemployment rate fell to 3.2 percent in December while total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 12,300**

**—Changes in these measures since April 2020 primarily reflect the effects of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and efforts to contain it. —**

**RICHMOND**— Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell 0.2 of a percentage point in December to 3.2 percent, which is 2.4 percentage points below the rate from a year ago. According to household survey data in December, the labor force increased by 1,966 to 4,261,535, as the number of unemployed residents decreased by 9,033 to 136,557. The number of employed residents rose by 10,999 to 4,124,978. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate, which fell from 4.2 to 3.9 percent. The Commonwealth's labor force participation rate held steady at 63.0% and was above the national rate of 61.9 percent. The labor force participation rate measures the proportion of the civilian population age 16 and older that is employed or actively looking for work.

Virginia nonagricultural wage and salary employment, from the monthly establishment survey, rose by 12,300 jobs in December to 3,988,100. November's preliminary estimate was revised upward by 5,100, adding to that month's job gain. In December, private sector employment increased by 13,300 jobs to 3,272,300 while public sector payrolls decreased by 1,000 jobs to 715,800. Much of the decrease within that sector occurred in state government (-1,000 jobs), but employment also fell in federal government (-300 jobs), while local government gained 300 jobs.

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Employment rose in nine of eleven major industry sectors and declined in two. The largest job gain during December occurred in **leisure and hospitality** with an increase of 6,000 jobs to 370,500. The second largest increase occurred in **professional and business services** (+3,400 jobs) to 789,400. **Trade and transportation** gained 2,700 jobs, rising to 664,400 in December. Other increases included **education and health services** (+400 jobs) to 541,500, **finance** (+400 jobs) to 204,600, **manufacturing** (+400 jobs) to 238,600, **construction** (+200 jobs) to 205,100, and **miscellaneous** (+200 jobs) to 182,800. The largest job loss during December occurred in **government** (-1,000 jobs) to 715,800. The second largest decrease occurred in **information** with a decrease of 500 jobs to 67,400.

### Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\* Seasonally Adjusted

Industry	Employment			November 2021 to December 2021		December 2020 to December 2021	
	December 2021	November 2021	December 2020	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	3,988,100	3,975,800	3,881,100	12,300	0.3%	107,000	2.8%
<b>Total Private Sector</b>	3,272,300	3,259,000	3,182,300	13,300	0.4%	90,000	2.8%
<b>Goods-Producing</b>	451,700	451,000	449,900	700	0.2%	1,800	0.4%
Mining	8,000	7,900	6,900	100	1.3%	1,100	15.9%
Construction	205,100	204,900	207,100	200	0.1%	-2,000	-1.0%
Manufacturing	238,600	238,200	235,900	400	0.2%	2,700	1.1%
<b>Service-Providing</b>	3,536,400	3,524,800	3,431,200	11,600	0.3%	105,200	3.1%
<b>Private Service-Providing</b>	2,820,600	2,808,000	2,732,400	12,600	0.4%	88,200	3.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	664,400	661,700	649,700	2,700	0.4%	14,700	2.3%
Information	67,400	67,900	64,500	-500	-0.7%	2,900	4.5%
Finance	204,600	204,200	208,400	400	0.2%	-3,800	-1.8%
Professional and Business Services	789,400	786,000	766,100	3,400	0.4%	23,300	3.0%
Education and Health Services	541,500	541,100	528,500	400	0.1%	13,000	2.5%
Leisure and Hospitality Services	370,500	364,500	335,600	6,000	1.6%	34,900	10.4%
Miscellaneous Services	182,800	182,600	179,600	200	0.1%	3,200	1.8%
<b>Government</b>	715,800	716,800	698,800	-1,000	-0.1%	17,000	2.4%
Federal Government	185,700	186,000	186,200	-300	-0.2%	-500	-0.3%
State Government	156,000	157,000	151,500	-1,000	-0.6%	4,500	3.0%
Local Government	374,100	373,800	361,100	300	0.1%	13,000	3.6%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

From December 2020 to December 2021, the VEC estimates that establishments in Virginia gained 107,000 jobs, an increase of 2.8%. In December, the private sector recorded an over-the-year gain of 90,000 jobs, while employment in the public sector gained 17,000 jobs.

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Compared to a year ago, on a **seasonally adjusted** basis, nine of eleven major industry divisions experienced employment increases. The largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **leisure and hospitality**, up 34,900 jobs (+10.4%). The next largest over-the-year job gain occurred in **professional and business services**, up 23,300 jobs (+3.0%). **Government** experienced the third largest over-the-year job gain of 17,000 jobs (+2.4%). Within government, there were increases in local government employment (+13,000 jobs) and state government employment (+4,500 jobs) while federal government declined by 500 jobs over the year. **Trade and transportation** gained 14,700 jobs (+2.3%) while **education and health services** employment rose by 13,000 jobs (+2.5%). **Miscellaneous** added 3,200 jobs (+1.8%). Other increases were in **information**, up 2,900 jobs (+4.5%); **manufacturing**, up 2,700 jobs (+1.1%); and **mining**, up 1,100 jobs (+15.9%). **Finance** declined by 3,800 jobs (-1.8%) while **construction** fell by 2,000 jobs (-1.0%).

### Total Nonfarm Employment in Virginia\* Seasonally Adjusted

Area	Employment			November 2021 to December 2021		December 2020 to December 2021	
	December 2021	November 2021	December 2020	Change	% Change	Change	% Change
<b>Virginia</b>	3,988,100	3,975,800	3,881,100	12,300	0.3%	107,000	2.8%
<b>Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford MSA</b>	79,000	79,300	73,400	-300	-0.4%	5,600	7.6%
<b>Charlottesville MSA</b>	113,900	113,100	112,700	800	0.7%	1,200	1.1%
<b>Harrisonburg MSA</b>	69,300	69,000	65,800	300	0.4%	3,500	5.3%
<b>Lynchburg MSA</b>	103,100	102,400	99,900	700	0.7%	3,200	3.2%
<b>Northern Virginia MSA</b>	1,507,600	1,505,800	1,452,700	1,800	0.1%	54,900	3.8%
<b>Richmond MSA</b>	652,400	649,400	651,400	3,000	0.5%	1,000	0.2%
<b>Roanoke MSA</b>	159,100	157,700	155,600	1,400	0.9%	3,500	2.2%
<b>Staunton-Waynesboro MSA</b>	52,300	52,200	50,900	100	0.2%	1,400	2.8%
<b>Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, Virginia/North Carolina MSA</b>	772,800	768,700	763,400	4,100	0.5%	9,400	1.2%
<b>Winchester, Virginia/West Virginia MSA</b>	68,600	68,300	66,000	300	0.4%	2,600	3.9%

\*Current month's estimates are preliminary.

**Seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment data is produced for ten metropolitan areas. In December, nine metropolitan areas experienced over-the-month job gains while one declined. The largest absolute job increase occurred in Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News (+4,100 jobs). The next largest absolute job gain occurred in Richmond (+3,000 jobs). The third largest increase occurred in Northern Virginia (+1,800 jobs). Roanoke added 1,400 jobs. Other over-the-month job gains occurred in Charlottesville (+800 jobs), Lynchburg (+700 jobs), Harrisonburg (+300 jobs), Winchester (+300 jobs), and Staunton-Waynesboro (+100 jobs). Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford declined by 300 jobs over-the-month.

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Over-the-year, **seasonally adjusted** total nonfarm employment increased in all ten metropolitan areas. The Northern Virginia metropolitan area experienced the largest absolute job gain, up 54,900 jobs (+3.8%). Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News ranked second, with a gain of 9,400 jobs (+1.2%). Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford ranked third, with a gain of 5,600 jobs (+7.6%). Other over-the-year job gains occurred in Harrisonburg (+3,500 jobs), Roanoke (+3,500 jobs), Lynchburg (+3,200 jobs), Winchester (+2,600 jobs), Staunton-Waynesboro (+1,400 jobs), Charlottesville (+1,200 jobs), and Richmond (+1,000 jobs).

## **NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED DATA**

Virginia's **unadjusted** unemployment rate remained unchanged in December at 2.7percent, and was down 3.0 percentage points from a year ago. Compared to a year ago, the number of unemployed decreased by 130,296, household employment increased by 143,477, and the labor force increased by 13,181. Virginia's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national unadjusted rate, which declined by 0.2 of a percentage point in December to 3.7 percent.

Compared to last month, the December unadjusted workweek for Virginia's 153,500 manufacturing production workers increased by one hour to 42.3 hours. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production workers increased by \$.01 to \$21.27 in December and average weekly earnings increased \$21.68 to \$899.72.

Technical note: Estimates of unemployment and industry employment levels are obtained from two separate monthly surveys. Resident employment and unemployment data are mainly derived from the Virginia portion of the national Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey conducted each month by the U.S. Census Bureau under contract with BLS, which provides input to the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program (often referred to as the "household" survey). Industry employment data is mainly derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, a monthly survey of approximately 18,000 Virginia businesses conducted by BLS, which provides estimates of employment, hours, and earnings data broken down by industry for the nation as a whole, all states and most major metropolitan areas (often referred to as the "establishment" survey). Both industry and household estimates are revised each month based on additional information from updated survey reports compiled by the BLS. **For national figures and information on how COVID-19 affected collection of the BLS establishment and household surveys in April 2020, refer to the BLS [December 2021 Employment Situation](#) press release for details.**

*The statistical reference week for the household survey this month was the week of December 12-18, 2021.*

The Virginia Employment Commission plans to release the December local area unemployment rates on Wednesday, February 2, 2022. The data will be available on our website [www.VirginiaWorks.com](http://www.VirginiaWorks.com). The January 2022 statewide unemployment rate and employment data for both the state and metropolitan areas are scheduled to be released on Monday, March 14, 2022.